

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 4 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over Dempo in view of Okabe. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states that Dempo fails to disclose a microprocessor that limits the number of bits representing VPI/VCI bits from among VPI/VCI bits transmitted in a header of ATM cells to be interpreted according to a number of ATM connection available for processing, but that Okabe teaches this feature. Applicants respectfully disagree, as detailed in the previously filed response. Applicants also disagree for the following reasons.

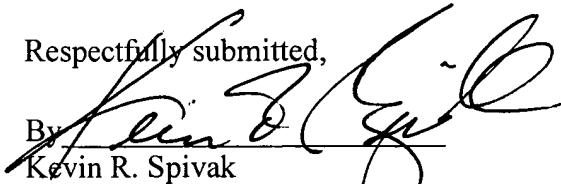
There is no reason why one having ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to combine the references. The Examiner comments that it would have been obvious to modify Dempo with Okabe since the "motivation is more integrated and efficient system that will reduce the amount of hardware for various tables and processing circuits, thereby reducing cost." It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's reasons for obviousness are conclusory statements without any evidentiary support on the record. The Examiner is kindly requested to cite a reference in support of his/her reasons for combining and modifying the references, or withdraw the rejection.

In view of the above, the pending claims are in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, Applicants' petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing Attorney Docket No. 449122029900.

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Respectfully submitted,

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